

PUBLIC NOTICE
October 19, 2005
JR Miller Ranches Land Exchange Proposal

The State of Montana, Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) is evaluating a proposed land exchange involving property located in both Ravalli and Lewis and Clark Counties. The lands in Ravalli County are located near Sula (Portions of Sections 15, 16, 21 and 22, T2N-R19W). The lands in Lewis and Clark County are located near Lincoln (Portions of Sections 1, 2, 3, 9, and 12, T14N-R9W). Overall approximately 800 acres of State (school trust) land and approximately 1,458 acres of private land have been identified for exchange. Maps of the exchange proposal along with the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) can be viewed on the DNRC Web site <http://dnrc.mt.gov/millercove.htm>.

Benefits of the exchange include 1) Securing improved access for land management activities on state-owned property, 2) Acquiring lands with higher revenue generating potential for the state school trusts, 3) Consolidation of land within the Lincoln State Forest, and 4) Reducing the potential for land use conflicts with the JR Miller Ranches.

The DNRC is soliciting comments to the draft EA and public input regarding this proposal. The DNRC will hold public hearings in Hamilton on November 15, 2005 at the Bitterroot River Inn from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and in Lincoln on November 16, 2005 at the Lincoln Community Center from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. The exchange proposal will be discussed and questions answered followed by public testimony. Your attendance and comments are welcome and encouraged. If you have written comments on this proposal or are unable to attend the public hearings, submit written comments to: Tony Liane, Area Manager, Southwestern Land Office, 1401 27th Avenue, Missoula, MT 59804 or FAX: 406-542-4285 or: <mailto:tliane@mt.gov>. Comments must be received by 5:00 p.m., November 18, 2005. Please include your name, address, and telephone number with comments.

Following receipt of comments, the DNRC will review the comments, evaluate new issues and make necessary adjustments to the EA. A decision on the EA will then be rendered and a formal recommendation made to the State Board of Land Commissioners on December 19, 2005 for their approval or denial of the proposed exchange.

For further information contact;

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DNRC, Southwestern Land Office
Telephone 406-542-4261